

THE COLONIAL NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 2014

Little Rock, Arkansas

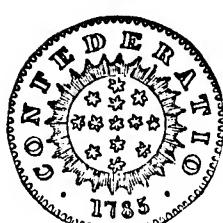
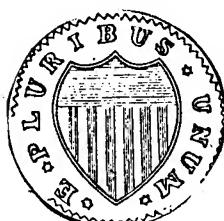
J.C. Spilman, Editor

Volume 5, No. 6

March 1965

Serial No. 14

REPRINTS



In conjunction with comments regarding RF-2 which are presented in this issue we are reprinting two articles which appeared during 1877 in numismatic journals of that era. We would like to know if these reprints are of value or interest to our readers. While such material can be located with relative ease if one has access to a good numismatic library, the simple fact remains that for most of us these items are out of easy reach, and probably have never been seen by most. Therefore, our interest is in learning if these reprints are of sufficient interest to warrant continuing their publication from time to time. Please tell us your thoughts on this matter.

Incidentally, the illustrations to the left are also reproduced from various publications of the mid-1800 era. These line engravings were about the best method of illustrating coins prior to the development of photographic techniques, and were usually wood cuts or copper line engravings.

THIS ISSUE ALSO CONTAINS

Part five of Robert A. Vlack's series — French Colonies Sous of 1767.

NEXT ISSUE

We are pleased to announce a new feature series starting in the next issue. This new feature will be CONNECTICUT COPERS and will be written by our prolific researcher Edward R. Barnsley of Newtown, Pennsylvania. The first article in the series will illustrate and discuss the Z reverses of the 1787 Connecticuts.

JCS

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REPORTS, LETTERS, etc.



-- from Walter Breen

-- who reports the discovery of a New Jersey 12-G in about uncirculated condition; perhaps the finest known specimen.

-- from Richard Picker

-- a new Fugio reverse in combination with obverse # 5. This is the first discovery of a Club Ray Fugio paired with a second obverse. From a private collection where it had been carried merely as a type coin.

-- from Edward R. Barnsley

In Serial No. 10 of The Colonial Newsletter, Walter H. Breen named five different Connecticuts known to have been struck over Nova Constellatioes. There are probably a great many more in existence, and it would be of great value to the writer's research if a complete listing of these unusual overstrikes could be obtained. In my own cabinet I have nine different examples, but can identify the undertype in only two cases. These specimens are:

1787, 33.38 - gg.1 over 1783 Nova 3-C

1788, 3 - B.1

1788, 3 - B.2

1788, 4.1 - B.1

1788, 4.1 - K over 1785 Nova 5-E

1788, 4.2 - R

1788, 5 - B.2

1788, 10 - C

1788, 12.2 - C

The New Netherlands Coin Company, Inc., auction catalogue No. 51, (June 19, 1958), indicated that 4.1 - B.2 is another 1788 Connecticut usually found struck over Nova Constellatioes. It also listed for sale the following pieces, but their present whereabouts is, of course, unknown:

Lot 109 1788, 3 - B.1 over 1785 Nova 4-C

Lot 110 1788, 3 - B.2 over 1785 Nova 5-E

Lot 113 1788, 4.1 - K over 1785 Nova 5-E

Lot 117 1788, 8 - K over "undecipherable" Nova

Lot 122 1788, 12.2 - C over 1785 Nova 5-E

If any reader knows about other Connecticut pieces similarly overstruck, in addition to those listed above, please send this information to the editor. It is, of course, particularly important to indicate the variety of the undertype whenever the Nova can be definitely attributed.

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more REPORTS, LETTERS, etc.

-- from Robert A. Vlack

It might be helpful to set up an illustration of the Fugio 14-H which I believe is still unique, and the 17-WW, as well as an illustration of the Massachusetts Cent 1788, 12-H.

Editor's note: It is our firm intention to publish photographs of new discoveries and other noteworthy items as a regular service; however, these plates cost money -- so, once again, our reminder that your contributions, as requested in the past two issues, are needed -- otherwise CN may continue to be little more than mere words. JCS

-- from Eric P. Newman

I hope the Newsletter continues. If however you think the items belong in The Numismatist why don't you ask for a "Colonial Newsletter" corner in that magazine? Just a thought.

-- from Edward R. Barnsley (once more)

The subject of "reworked dies" arises so often in connection with the Connecticut series that I think I should state my concept of the process, and thereby invite -- I sincerely hope -- correspondence from those who disagree. First, I feel there is a general misconception as to what kind of design alteration is theoretically possible between a die as originally cut and the same die as subsequently reworked. The question is, can reworking subtract as well as add features? Answer: No.

I believe that only features not previously shown can be added to a reworked die; as for example, a cinquefoil could be punched into the field if there were no previous indentation at that point.

However, this same cinquefoil could not be removed at will, because there was no method of filling in its intaglio depression. Deletion of the cinquefoil punching could only be accomplished by grinding away all or part of the striking surface until said depression disappeared. This alteration would thereupon result in the removal of other design features having equal depth. So they, in turn, would have to be resunk if it were desired to have them show up on the reworked die.

Such resinking would likely result in more or less offsetting, and thus may account for such remarkable phenomena as twenty five different varieties of the reverse Z dies of 1787. By the way, why don't we say "twenty five dice", for dice is the correct plural form of die? Is collecting Early American Coins gamble enough?



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THE FRENCH COLONIES SOUS of 1767

(part five)

Robert A. Vlack

It has been over a year since the last article of the 1767 French Colonies Sous has appeared in The Colonial Newsletter and since that time, two new varieties have been discovered now extending the number of basic die varieties to 19. It can never be assumed that this would be the end of the line, however, the end is somewhere within reason, and this is at least my objective.

The last variety described appeared in the December, 1963 issue and was the 9-I. Again, a variety (the 12-L) will be omitted for the present using the same reasoning as the 4-D. No variety has been discovered without the "RF" counterstamp, and rather than illustrate the specimen with the counterstamp, I chose to leave it out for the present and add it at a time when (a.) a variety without the counterstamp is discovered or (b.) I run out of varieties in which case I shall then illustrate and describe the specimen with the counterstamps.

As previously mentioned over and over again, if better specimens than those illustrated are known, I would appreciate seeing them and photographing them for a future composite works. To date only one collector has ever cooperated in this endeavor which certainly does not encourage me to continue a series such as this. It is very difficult to believe that I have all of the known varieties in the best of condition, especially if I review some of the earlier issues and see what has been illustrated. My point here is, I need specimens from other collectors to conduct a worthwhile research program, and I am making this appeal to collectors who have these specimens in their collection whether it be one or more than one.

I have not even written on the counterstamps yet which is another phase of this project, thus I would be interested in seeing all 1767's sous both with and without the counterstamps. If you have any of these and want to help, please send them to me at the following address:

39 Donna Street
West Peabody, Massachusetts 01962

I shall hold on to them only long enough to photograph them if necessary and extract any information I can from them. I feel like a United Fund campaigner asking everyone to help by doing their share. It is necessary, believe me.

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Obverse 10 - In COLONIES, letters neatly spaced. Base of L high, N recut on sharp specimens. E leans slightly right. In FRANCOISES, F very low and leans left. N leans left, E high and closer to 2nd S at base. Final S low and leans right. In L.XV, the L leans left, period closer to arms and is high. Apex of V is below base of X with right upright of V below left upright and appears defective on top. "A" mintmark leans left.

Reverse J - SIT normal. In NOMEN, O slightly closer to N, M leans slightly left and is slightly lower, left base of N's extend below legend. In DOMINI, O closer to D, 1st I high, N leans slightly right, and 2nd I about parallel with N. In BENEDICTUM, 2nd E low, D is large, T low, and U leans slightly left. Leaf ends under left upright of 1. Top of crown is closer to S. Die break occurs between 1st E of BENEDICTUM and rim.

Obverse 11 - In COLONIES, C leans slightly right, both O's lean right, L and O close, I leans slightly right, base of E below I and S. In FRANCOISES, R leans slightly right, A slightly high, E high and leans right. In L.XV, base of L curves down to the left, period midway. X very slightly below V and leans slightly left. Chip breaks occur after S of COLONIES and above E of FRANCOISES.

Reverse K - In SIT, S is high, I leans slightly left. NOMEN about normal. In DOMINI, O slightly closer to M. In BENEDICTUM, widest spacing between DIC with I high. M leans slightly right. Leaf ends just past the center of 1, which is slightly high. The 7's are different with the serif of the 1st 7 extending too far down. Top of crown is slightly closer to S. Breaks occur between OM of NOMEN and in letters OMNI and BENED. Also between the wreath and M of DOMINI. Specimen observed was on a thinner and slightly wider planchet.

Obverse 13 - In COLONIES, C leans slightly right, N leans left, S is low. Break or recutting shows at bottom right of S. In FRANCOISES FR close, A leans left and is slightly low, S's lean right, E is high. In L.XV, period closer to L and not as close to arms as other varieties. X leans down to the left. "A" mintmark leans slightly right.

Reverse M - In SIT, I leans left. In NOMEN, M leans right. In DOMINI, N slightly high and leans slightly left. In BENEDICTUM, BEN is almost on straight line, ED also. D is slightly low and closer to E. TU slightly low and parallel. Leaf ends under left upright of 1, final 7 slightly low. Top of crown closer to S. Break from bottom of 1st I in DOMINI through center of left upright of N.

THE FRENCH COLONIES SOUS OF 1767



10-J



11-K



13-M

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RESEARCH FORUM

RF-2

In the August 1963 issue of CN query RF-2 was published in the RESEARCH FORUM at the request of one of our readers:

What is the source of the name "Juan Bermudez" ascribed to a ship's captain, or of a ship named "Bermudas". They have long been found in the Guide Book. Where did the compilers get either name?

In reply to RF-2, Mr. R. S. Yeoman provides an answer to our correspondent and suggests a route for additional research on this subject. Also, as we mentioned on the cover page, we are reprinting two related articles which appeared in early numismatic journals. These are THE HOG MONEY OF THE SOMERS ISLANDS written by Gen. J.H. Lefroy, C.B. (Governor of Bermuda) and originally published in the Numismatic Chronicle (London) and reprinted in the July 1877 issue of American Journal of Numismatics, and BERMUDA - an article from the December 1877 issue of The Coin Collector's Journal. While these two articles add no new information to the question at hand, they do serve to illustrate the depth of investigation (or the lack of depth, depending on one's point of view) of the mid-1870's, and the notable lack of new information generated since that time.

--- from R. S. Yeoman

On page 7 of the August 1963 issue there is a reference in the RESEARCH FORUM , RF-2, with regard to the Bermudas. Inasmuch as you referred directly to my book A GUIDE BOOK OF UNITED STATES COINS, I thought it would be proper for me to indicate the source for the information.

Bermuda, according to the Columbia Encyclopedia, which is closest at hand: "Discovered in 1515 by the Spaniard Juan de Bermudez ..."

The original works of Captain John Smith were republished in Glasgow in 1907, and I have the two-volume work in my library. This was freely quoted in S.S. Crosby's THE EARLY COINS OF AMERICA. The important passage reads as follows:

How these Iles came by the name of Bermudas, or the infinite number of blacke Hogs, or so fearefull to the world, that many called them the Ile of Deuils, that all men did shun as Hell and perdition ; I will not expostulate,

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nor trouble your patiences with those vncertaine antiquities further then thus ; our men found divers crosses, peeces of Spanish monies here and there. Two or three wracks also they found, by certaine inscriptions to bee some Spanish, some Dutch, some French ; but the greatest rumour is, that a Spanish ship called Bermudas was there cast away, carrying Hogges to the West-Indies that swam a shore, and there increased : how the Spaniards escaped is vncertaine : but they say, from that ship those Iles were first called Bermudas, which till then for six thousand yeares had beene namelesse.

Now in one case we have the name of the person and in the other the name of the ship. We have at least two avenues of proof that the name Bermuda was based on either of these facts.

Those who have a volume of THE EARLY COINS OF AMERICA will find this coverage in the beginning of the book.

I have never gone beyond the Captain Smith source, as I do not feel that the exact time and person are important in the history of the Bermuda Islands. From an historic viewpoint, however, it would be most interesting to discover the details of the person and the ship, Juan de Bermudez. Sometimes old archives in Spain reveal startling facts and it is entirely possible that some historian in Spain would have the facts. Perhaps this may be a suggestion for your correspondent.

I hope the foregoing is the information desired. I might mention that the Sommer Island shilling and six pence, which I own, are among my most treasured numismatic possessions.

- - - from AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NUMISMATICS. July, 1877

THE HOG MONEY OF THE SOMERS ISLANDS.

BY GEN. J. H. LEFROY, C. B. (GOVERNOR OF BERMUDA.)

THE difficulty of obtaining currency for the new transatlantic settlements, was one which made itself felt very early in the colonization of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Spain herself, mistress of the precious metals, could not at first solve it. In 1586, they used in St. Domingo and Porto Rico a currency of small square pieces of leather, for want of silver and gold,* and some years later, in 1638, a paper money.† It is therefore, no matter of surprise that the Virginia Company of London, in obtaining from James I. a charter for the settlement of Bermudas (1612) should have contemplated

* See Southey's Chronological History of the West Indies, i. p. 238.

† Ibid. i. p. 280.

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the issue of a special coinage. In their instructions, dated April 27, 1612, to their first Governor, Mr. Richard Moore, they say—(Act. 4.): “Wee ordaine that such persons, workemen or labourers, as shall at any tyme be employed by you for our business in the said Plantacon, you shall give unto them such reasonable day wages as in your discretion you shall esteeme them worthie to have deserved, so that exceed not xx*d.* for workmen and i*d.* for a labourer, for which purpose by the next supplie there shalbe a coyne sent unto you withall convenient opportunitie, togeather with the rates and values thereof.” (Bermuda Records, MS. A.)

The “next supplie,” we learn from “History of Virginia,” was not long delayed. It arrived in the same year, and another in June, 1613, but as that author is silent as to any money having arrived, by either, or at any time in Governor Moore’s reign, it seems probable that the company did not make good their intention.

The Virginia Company resigned the Bermudas to the Crown in November, 1614, and they were shortly afterwards granted to a new incorporation, entitled the Governor and Company of the City of London for the plantation of the Somers Islands, by letters patent, dated June 29, 1615, in which distinct provision is made for the issue of a coinage in the following terms:—“And wee do further for us, our heires and successors, give and Grant the said Governor and Company, and their Successors, that they shall and lawfully may Establish and cause to bee made a coyne to pass Currant in their said Somer Islands, betweene the Inhabitants there for the more easey of comerce and bargaining betweene them (*sic*) of such metall and in such manner and forme as the said Governor and Company in any of their said Generall Courts, shall limitt and appoint.”

This coinage is distinctly alluded to by Smith:—“Besides meat, drinke, and clothes, they had for a time a certain kind of brasse money, with a Hogge on the one side in memory of the abundance of hogges, was found at their first landing.”—(Smith, under 1616), and the Company in their instructions to Governor Daniel Tucker, dated February 15, 1615, Par. 25, says:—“Yf any refuse and will not accept his contentment out of the p.ffdits in that case, we have appointed a base coyne, wch we send rated with our p.visions, whereby you may give to such men their weekly wages when they worke, and as you shall find them to deserve, wth wch coyne yt shalbe lawfull and free for them to buy any p.visions out of the store, or any ffishe, corne, tooles, or any such thinge in the Islands where they can gett the same. And to that end you shall p.claim the sayde coyne to be currant to pass frelye from man to man, only throughout the Islands, and not otherwise.”

Par. 26:—“And yf by this means yt shall soe fall out that many men of the said general employmt shall rather accept to take their contentment by such weekely wages, in Base Coyne, whereby the number of those that rest contented with the contract of p.ffdits must yssue from vs to give them content, yet for theire better encouragement wee p.mise of our own voluntarye, that the one-half of whatsoever shalbe found that wee have gained by the contentinge soe many with base coyne, shalbe freely imported by vs to those that have willinglie yielded to take their salarye out of the p.ffdits to make these dividends the better.”

The Hog money of the Somers Islands, as it is the earliest of all colonial coins, has also been regarded as the rarest. A specimen, sold at the sale of the Rev. Jos. Martin, which I take to have been the piece at one time in the cabinet of Thomas Hollis, was then supposed to be unique. It was engraved by Snelling; 1769.* and by Ruding† and described in this *journal*,‡ by the late Mr. Henry Christmas, as the only specimen known to exist. It was of the xii d. value. The existence of a smaller type of vi d. current value, does not appear to have been known to either of these authorities, and the writer has only seen three examples. Of the larger type, there are in Bermuda itself about eight examples, one of which was found as recently as last year; but of these, two or three are indifferent specimens.

Mr. Christmas's description is as follows:— Type I.—Obverse, SOMER ISLAND. A wild boar, with the Roman numerals XII. MM, a mullet of five points. There seems to have been a misprint in the word SOMER, as it is spelt SOMMER on the coins, and also in the engravings of Snelling and Ruding. Reverse, A ship under sail, firing a gun, (with the cross of St. George at every masthead.) There is something projecting beyond the prow of a curved character, which may possibly be intended for the smoke of a cannon, but seems much like a fantastic beak. A defect in the striking of the side of the ship may possibly have been mistaken for the representation of smoke from a cannon. Type II.—Obverse, SOMER ISLAND. A wild boar, with the Roman numerals VI. MM, a cross. Reverse, A ship under sail, with the cross of St. George at every masthead. The hogs are very well drawn, and do not bear out the statements of the half-starved character of these animals in their wild state. The ships, with their high poop and forecastle, are of a very ancient type.

The records of the Colony of Bermuda are extant from the year 1616 downwards, but careful and repeated examination has failed to discover any allusion to this coinage. The currency was tobacco; all debts were recovered and paid in tobacco; all taxes were assessed and levied in tobacco. It would seem as if an insuperable prejudice, which the Company seem to have anticipated, had, from the commencement, prevented the circulation of money without intrinsic value. Where tobacco is not mentioned, the word sterling is always introduced, and this is perhaps the only ground for a supposition that there may once have been a metallic currency circulation; but as the coins were not intended to leave the colony, the very limited number of specimens now known to have been preserved, is itself an argument that few were ever issued.—*Numismatic Chronicle*, (London.)

* Miscellaneous Views of the Coins Struck by English Princes, &c. By Thos. Snelling, London, MDCCCLXIX. Pl. IV. 15.

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† Supplement, Part 2, Plate vii, 14.

‡ Numismatic Chronicle, London, Vol. ii., N. S., 1861, p. 210.

Before this paper appeared in the *Numismatic Chronicle*, Mr. Sylvester S. Crosby had printed a longer and very careful account of the Sommer Islands coinage, in his work entitled "The Early Coins of America." It is unfortunate that Gen. Lefroy and Mr. Crosby had not been in communication, as the coins known to one were unknown to the other. Gen. Lefroy does not say whether there are any specimens in England. From the two works the number of shillings would seem to be ten, and of sixpences, four. One of the editors believes his shilling to be the identical one described by Snelling and Ruding.

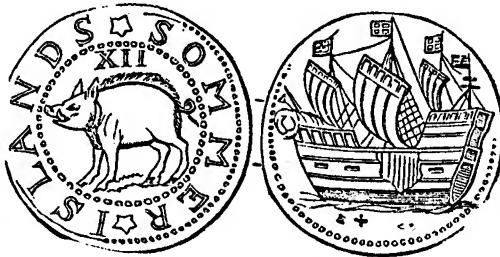
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— — — from THE COIN COLLECTOR'S JOURNAL. December, 1877.

Bermuda.



BERMUDA, OR SOMMER ISLAND SHILLING, 1612 A. D.

Another of those groups of West Indian islands, whose coinages we have been considering in recent issues of the JOURNAL, is Bermuda, or the Bermudas. These islands indeed are so far north of the Caribbean Archipelago, that they constitute more properly a group by themselves. Lying about 600 miles east of Cape Hatteras in North Carolina, and somewhat farther north of the Bahamas, there is, perhaps, no community on any portion of the earth's surface so isolated and so far away from any other as that inhabiting the Bermudas. The position of these islands gives them an importance far beyond what either their size or their products would have obtained for them, while the fortifications with which they are covered render them one of England's strong garrison outposts.

Bermuda was discovered in 1515 by a Spaniard named Juan Bermudez, by whom a number of hogs were landed on it, while a fierce gale suddenly arising prevented any of the sailors from disembarking. The necessities of navigation often brought mariners near the islands, but the dangerous rocks and the stormy seas by which they were surrounded caused them to be so dreaded, that as wide a berth as possible was ever given to them. In 1593, a French man-of-war was wrecked upon them, nearly every soul on board of her perishing. After six months' confinement on these lonely rocks, the survivors constructed a little vessel, by which they escaped to Newfoundland, a full description of the islands being afterwards published in England by a man named May, who had been one of the party.

Another shipwreck brought another band to the islands. In 1609 an expedition of nine ships and five hundred men under Sir Thos. Gates and Sir George Summers had been sent out from England to assist in the colonization of Virginia. In a hurricane in the Gulf of Bahama, the fleet was scattered and eventually the ship containing the leaders was wrecked with great loss of life on the Bermudas. After some eight months the shipwrecked party built two small vessels by means of which they succeeded in reaching Virginia. The favorable reports that these persons circulated about the soil and climate of the Bermudas, led to a great desire to colonize them, so that a number of shareholders detached themselves from the Virginia Company and having obtained a charter from James I., formed themselves into that of the Summer Islands.

On the 28th April, 1612, an expedition left England for the purpose of colonizing "the smoothe Bermoothes." In the letter of instruction given to Richard Moore, who had been appointed Governor, we read that reasonable wages were to be paid, not exceeding XXd for workmen (skilled labor) and 12d. for laborers, and that a coin suitable for

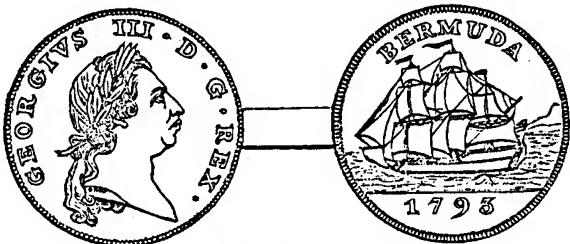
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such payments would be sent out to the Colony by the next convoy. In 1614 the Company resigned the Islands to the Crown and received a new incorporation as the Governor and Company of the City of London for the plantation of the Somers Islands. In this document, the Company was distinctly allowed to issue coin for use in the islands, of such metal and in such form as might be most expedient. In 1615 the Company writing to Governor Tucker, who had succeeded Moore, instructed him that for those who declined to receive the fruits of their labor in shares of the profits, a certain base coin had been issued, in which weekly wages should be paid and which should pass current for all purposes throughout the islands. In 1616 a local writer thus describes the circumstances of the people. "Besides meat, drink and clothes, they had for a time a certain kind of brass money with a hogge on one side in memory of the abundance of hogges that was found at their first landing."

This earliest money of these islands may be thus described: *Obv.*: a wild boar facing left with Roman numerals XII above; legend SOMER ISLAND, both words separated by a mullet of five points. *Rev.*: a ship under sail with a flag on each mast and the smoke of a gun rolling away over the bow. Of another piece of lower value, the device on both sides is precisely similar, except that on the obverse we have the numerals VI in place of XII, and the legend reads SOMER ISLAND. These coins are exceedingly rare, only about ten of the large ones and four of the smaller ones having as yet found their way into our cabinets.



BERMUDA HALFPENNY, 1793.

For nearly two hundred years, no farther coinage was issued for Bermuda, Spanish and English current coins freely circulating and answering all the purposes of a local issue. At last, in February, 1793, the Committee of Privy Council for Trade in Great Britain, recommended that two hundred pounds worth of copper coins should be issued for Bermuda. The striking of these was intrusted to Mr. Boulton of Soho, when the engraver, Droz, prepared the dies for the coins that were issued. *Obv.*: a bold, handsome laureated head of George III. to right, legend GEORGIVS III. D. G. REX.; *rev.*: a ship under full canvas, sailing to left, with a high peak just visible over the stern; legend BERMUDA, and in the exergue, 1793.

CN